



State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services

## **Administrative Policies and Procedures: 20A.4**

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**Subject: Continuation of Medical Insurance Coverage Upon Release From DCS Custody**

Supersedes: None

Local Policy: No

Local Procedures: No

Training Required: No

Approved by:

Effective date: 02/01/04

Revision date:

### **Application**

To All Department of Children's Services Employees

**Authority:** TCA 37-5-102; 37-1-137; 37-5-106

### **Policy**

The Department of Children's Services shall require that form *HS-0169, Tennessee Department of Human Services Application or Review of Eligibility for Families First, Food Stamps, Medicaid* be submitted to the Department of Human Services (DHS) and that further requirements needed to determine the child/youth's eligibility for TennCare be completed prior to a child/youth leaving DCS custody, unless documentation is provided establishing that the child/youth's health care needs will be covered by private insurance.

### **Procedures**

#### **A. Child/youth in Foster Care**

1. Thirty days (30) prior to child/youth's expected release, or immediately if child/youth is released unexpectedly, the Home County Case Manager (HCCM) shall assist the family or caretaker in completing form *HS-0169, Tennessee Department of Human Services Application or Review of Eligibility for Families First, Food Stamps, Medicaid*. The application form can be obtained from <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/hs-0169.pdf>.

2. Parents or Caretakers will be instructed by HCCM to submit a completed TennCare application to local DHS office.  
**Because the DCS Child Welfare Benefits Counselor (CWBC) will need to notify DHS when the child/youth has left DCS custody, the HCCM must work with the family in this process to ensure that the DHS case worker's name is known.** The HCCM will provide assistance as needed with this process to help the family understand the requirements placed on them by TennCare and DHS to complete the application process. These DHS requirements may include, but are not limited to:
  - a) Documentation of wages,
  - b) Birth certificates,
  - c) Social security cards, and
  - d) Completion of an eligibility interview
3. The HCCM shall request from the regional CWBC confirmation of any open DCS based benefits cases. The HCCM shall also request confirmation that the family has complied with all application requirements such as attending any and all needed interviews and providing all necessary documents to DHS. This information can be obtained by the regional CWBC by completing an inquiry into ACCENT Screen AEWVR or checking the ACCENT Running Record. If additional verifications or eligibility documents are needed by DHS, the parents or caretaker of the foster child/youth will be provided a notice of the information needed by the DHS eligibility counselor.
4. If the application process is completed and the child/youth is released from custody, the HCCM shall notify the CWBC that the child/youth has been released from custody and provide the name of the child/youth's new DHS eligibility counselor. The CWBC shall notify the child/youth's new DHS eligibility counselor of the effective closure date of any DCS based benefits cases so that DHS benefits cases can be opened.

**B. Juvenile Justice Youth**

1. Thirty days (30) prior to child/youth's expected discharge from custody, or immediately if child/youth is discharged from custody unexpectedly, the HCCM shall assist the family or caretaker in completing form HS-0169, *Tennessee Department of Human Services Application or Review of Eligibility for Families First, Food Stamps,*

*Medicaid.* The application form can be found at <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/hs-0169.pdf>. If youth is to have a trial home visit, the beginning of this process can coincide with the beginning of the trial home visit. If the youth does not have a trial home visit, this process shall begin thirty days prior to the youth's expected discharge or immediately if child/youth's discharge is unexpected.

2. Parents or Caretakers will be instructed by the HCCM to submit the completed TennCare application to the local DHS office. **Because DCS CWBC will need to notify DHS when the child/ youth has left DCS custody, the HCCM must work with the family in this process and ensure that the DHS case worker's name is given to the family.** In addition, the HCCM will provide assistance as needed with this process helping the family understand the requirements placed on them by TennCare and DHS to complete the application process. These DHS requirements may include, but are not limited to documentation of wages, birth certificates, Social Security cards, and completion of an eligibility interview.
3. The HCCM shall request from the regional CWBC confirmation of any open DCS based benefits cases. The HCCM shall also request confirmation that family has complied with all application requirements such as attending any and all needed interviews and providing all necessary documents to DHS. This confirmation can be obtained by the regional CWBC by completing an inquiry into ACCENT Screen AEWVR or checking the ACCENT Running Record. If additional verifications or eligibility documents are needed by DHS, the parents or caretaker of the foster child/youth will be provided a notice of the information needed by the DHS eligibility counselor.
4. If the application process is completed and the child/youth is released from custody, the HCCM shall notify CWBC that the child/youth has been released from custody and provide the name of the child/youth's new DHS eligibility counselor to the regional CWBC. The CWBC shall notify the child/youth's new DHS eligibility counselor of the effective closure date of any DCS based benefits cases so that DHS benefits cases can be opened.

**C. Child/youth aging out of custody**

1. Thirty days (30) prior to youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (or 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, in the case of youth given an indeterminate sentence who are scheduled to be discharged from custody), DCS Central Office Foster Care staff will send via

the HCCM a letter and a pamphlet concerning "*Post Custody and TennCare*" along with appropriate information on the John C. Chafee Program.

2. Upon receipt of pamphlet and letter, the DCS case manager shall set up a conference call or an appointment for the youth, the case manager, and the CWBC to discuss the best way for the youth to retain or gain TennCare coverage. If the CWBC determines that the youth's TennCare cannot be maintained or gained through the Title IV-E Foster Care Program, the case manager shall assist the youth in completing the application form HS-0169, *Tennessee Department of Human Services Application or Review of Eligibility for Families First, Food Stamps, Medicaid*. The Application can be found at: <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/hs-0169.pdf>.
3. If the CWBC determines the TennCare can be maintained or gained through the Title IV-E Foster Care Program or any other program administered exclusively by DCS, the CWBC will inform the case manager of any eligibility information needed to determine the youth's TennCare eligibility. The CWBC will then establish and authorize the youth's eligibility for TennCare.
4. If the CWBC determines that the child/youth no longer qualifies for TennCare through a DCS administered service, the CWBC will instruct the HCCM and the youth to submit completed TennCare application to local DHS office.
5. The DCS CWBC will need to notify DHS when the youth's DCS based benefits have been closed, therefore, the HCCM must work with the youth in this process to ensure that the DHS case worker's name is made known.
6. The DHS eligibility counselor should be asked about all potential assistance for which the youth could qualify. Unless the youth requests otherwise, the HCCM will accompany the youth to the local DHS office so that both the HCCM and the youth clearly understand the application requirements. These DHS requirements may include, but are not limited to documentation of wages, birth certificates, Social Security cards, and completion of an eligibility interview.
7. If the youth has been classified as disabled, he or she may qualify for SSI benefits. If the youth were approved for SSI benefits, he/she would be categorically eligible for TennCare benefits. In addition to the TennCare application process outlined above, the youth and the HCCM in all cases should make an application for SSI benefits where

the youth has been diagnosed as having a disability. This includes serious emotional disturbance (SED), mental retardation, or physical disabilities. This application process shall be completed through the local Social Security office.

8. The HCCM shall work closely with the youth to ensure that all requirements of the DHS application process and/or the SSI process are completed before the youth's birthday.
9. If application process is completed and child/youth is released from custody, the HCCM shall notify the CWBC that the youth has been released from custody and provide the CWBC the name of the child/youth's new DHS eligibility counselor. The CWBC shall notify the youth's new DHS eligibility counselor of the effective closure date of any DCS based benefits cases so that DHS benefits cases can be opened.

## **Forms**

HS-0169 Tennessee Department of Human Services Application or Review of Eligibility for Families First, Food Stamps, Medicaid  
(<http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/hs-0169.pdf>)

## **Collateral Documents**

*Child Welfare Benefits Determination*

*Notification of Change of Circumstances*

## **Standards**

DCS Model of Practice Standard 7-117C